

## Indian Chieftain.

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D. M. HARRIS, Editor.  
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VINITA, IND. TER., FEB. 7, 1895.

The Nationals have worked themselves into a state of mind bordering on desperation trying to locate the \$6,500 check that they refused to receive into the treasury some years since.

A bill passed the lower house of congress Saturday, granting a right-of-way to the Oklahoma central railroad company. This company intends to build an extension to the Frisco from Sapulpa west, and of course is important to Vinita.

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It is difficult to see what good can come to the Indians of this country by denying the facts contained in the report of the Dawes commission. Up to the present time eastern sentiment has been pretty safely on the side of the Indian autonomist, but the denial of the charges of the commission by our delegation has led to a free and full investigation by congress of the subject at issue, and has begun to tell in favor of the position taken by old Senator Dawes and his colleagues. No good can come to the Cherokees to be sure, by our delegation's holding out and sticking to the statement that there is positively no monopoly existing here, when the whole country knows that it is to-day the curse of every Indian reservation in the country.

The question that is uppermost in the minds of the American people just now seems to be that of the currency. There are probably few people who thoroughly understand the question, but fewer still who are not willing to give an opinion. The prospect now is that more bonds will be issued shortly. A lot of bonds are issued to keep up the gold reserve, and sold for gold which is drawn out of the treasury for the purpose of paying for the bonds. If the government's credit is good for the bonds we do not see what use there is in issuing them at all, as it would be just as good for treasury notes issued for the purpose of tiding over the present bankrupt condition of the country. What is the use of a gold reserve if it is to be made the plaything of bond brokers who use it to increase their hold on the wealth of the nation? The gold kings seem to have the upper hand of us just now, however, but the time may come when their rule will be at an end, and the nation be governed in righteousness. There is a limit even to the patience of the American people.

The observant portion of the people of this city have not failed to note that in the years that have gone by and are going by, a mighty transformation has been constantly going on. That which would have been considered first class ten years ago, would fall far below medium at the present. The people are gradually coming to a higher standard, and society is constantly demanding more and yet more of its votaries. The schools and the churches have been the great leavening influences that have quietly and slowly, but surely, been at work, always demanding higher ideals. Those who a few years ago were representative men of the town have some how or other been set aside, and others of a better standard of morality have taken their places. Time was when men could go down into the slime and mire of drunken stupor, and lie in the filth of our gutters, or black-guard and profane in the presence of our wives and children, yet pose as factors in the political and moral makeup of our community. Happy transformation from a worse to a better condition, from a lower to a higher standard of manhood and womanhood! Glorious transformation that demands decency of every one that aspires to respectability!

## UNSHACKLE THE PRESS.

Last week we printed from the Congressional Record the speech of Hon. J. S. Little, of Arkansas, on the Indian question. Judging from the enraged howl that has gone up from some quarters, it must have been a shot that drove center. It was even suggested that THE CHIEFTAIN should not have printed it; not that it was not substantially true throughout, but that it was too glaring an exposure of the conditions as they exist in this country.

The proposition that the facts in regard to crime in this country, and in regard to all matters political, moral, social or anything else that concerns a free people should not be given through the public prints is an erroneous and a dangerous idea, and is a blow at the very keystone of the structure upon which local self government is builded.

First of all there must be absolute freedom of opinion, untrammelled and unfettered by the interference of men or governments. Every man, woman or child in this nation must be permitted to think his thoughts unawed and untrammelled by the tyrannical interference of any man. And when we have freedom of thought we must have absolute freedom of speech to express that thought. Every individual tongue has a right to the general ear. This government like every government that is republican in form, must rest upon the intelligence, upon the patriotism and upon the morality of the people, and every citizen has a right to tell every other citizen what he believes. There is abundant reason to doubt and suspicion the man who would close the lips of reason, and manacle the brain of the people. There is every reason to despise the man that would poison the source of all human progress by muzzling the press of the country. Men who forget to apply the principle of universal liberty of thought and speech and of toleration are a menace to this or any other government. It is remembered to the disgrace of protestant England that religious intolerance drove the puritans from her shores. Let every American honor the memory of Roger Williams as the first grand advocate of the liberty of speech and of real civil and religious liberty, while the authorities of his country stood ready with branding iron and gallows to burn and choke out of man the idea that he had a right to think and to express his thoughts. The declaration of independence is the wisest, the profoundest and the bravest political document ever written without any exception, and it guarantees to us all the right of liberty, life and the pursuit of happiness.

The history of the world is the history of the slow and painful enfranchisement of the human race. A few centuries ago a ruler held the power of life and death in his hand. The stronger nations of the earth robbed, plundered and took captive the weaker ones, and put to death those who wrote or spoke against them. But we have seen the dawn of a better day. We have not only local self-government, but something more glorious—the absolute independence of the individual.

When the venerable Isaac C. takes snuff all Ft. Smith sneezes and it is not surprising that the press of that town has a severe case of influenza.

How They Died. Take a walk through our cemeteries and you pass the last resting place of the man who blew in a gun to see if it was loaded. A little further down the hillside is buried the crank who tried to see how close he could pass to a moving train. In strolling about you pass the modest monument of the hired girl who started the fire with kerosene, and the grass covered knoll that covers what is left of the boy that put a corn cob under a mule's tail. The tall shaft of the man who blew out the gas casts a shadow across the bosom of the boy who tried to jump a moving railroad train. Side by side the ethereal creature who always had her corset laced to the last hole and the intellectual idiot who rode a bicycle nine miles in ten minutes, sleep on undisturbed. Here reposes the remains of the young doctor who took a dose of his own medicine, and just over there with the top of a shoe box driven down by his head, lies a rich old man who married a young wife. Away over by the side gate reposes the remains of the boy that went fishing on Sunday and the old woman that kept her strychnine side by side with her baking powder in the cupboard. The man who stood in front of the mowing machine to oil the sickle is quiet now, and he rests by the side of the careless brakeman who fed himself to a seventy-ton engine. The fool-killer is gathering them in one by one, still he is sometimes behind with his orders.

R. S. Davis, of the Pryor Creek Enterprise, has taken possession of the Granby Sentinel, on which he held a mortgage, and will move it to Wagoner where he is going into business with Mr. Lindsey, lately of the Record. He will continue to conduct the Enterprise.

## THE GOVERNMENT'S DUTY

Continued From Page One.

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yet when public sentiment became aroused against the Chinese and the people determined that their presence here with any intention of accepting citizenship was "unfavorable to the interests of the United States," which in effect annulled a part of the treaty with the Chinese. There is no question about the congress of the United States having the power to abrogate a treaty with a foreign nation, much less a treaty with the Indians, a majority of whom are American citizens, and all of whom are under the jurisdiction of the United States.

The supreme court said that congress had the right to do it. The point was made that the Geary act was in violation of our treaty, and if you will refer to the case you will find that the court decided that congress had the same power to abrogate a treaty that it has to repeal a law, and supported it with an unbroken line of cases. Now, then, if we can annul a treaty with a foreign nation, we can certainly do it with the Indian tribes. Here we are dealing mainly with the people who are under the protection of our flag, for whom we are carrying the mails free of cost to over 300 postoffices, 60 of them being large enough to issue money orders. Assuming, then, that you agree with me that congress has the power to act without the consent of the Indian tribes notwithstanding the treaties, I will show you that it is the part of wisdom and justice to act, and that what we intend to do toward the Indians should be done before we surrender jurisdiction and control over Oklahoma by admitting it into the Union as a state.

The treaties were made many years ago for the purpose of separating the Indians from the whites. Then the Indian country was removed from white settlement. Now it is surrounded by states containing an active, aggressive, enterprising population whose future to a great extent depends upon the different forms of government from the residents of the Indian country. Then there were no full-blood whites in the Territory; now there are but few, if any, full-blood Indians. Then the residents were members of the tribes; now there are five white non-citizens for every Indian citizen. Then the Indians had but few houses and lived principally by the chase; now many of them have magnificent residences and cultivate their land or have it done by their white tenants.

Then there were no churches except missions; now they have in every town and community comfortable churches, representing the different Christian denominations. Then they had no charitable institutions; now they have homes for the old and decrepit, asylums for the insane, and institutions for the education and maintenance of orphans. Then there were no newspapers; now there are over fifty. Then there were no towns; now there are many containing from 500 to 5,000 population with improvements worth over \$5,000,000. Then the coal and other mines had not been discovered; now they are admitted to be the richest in the west, and are practically inexhaustible. Then there was not a mile of railroad; now there are 1,200 miles in operation and as many more in contemplation. Then but few whites had intermarried with the Indians; now there are scarcely a family to be found among them without a preponderance of white blood. Then the country was used and ruled by the real Indians to whom it was patented; now a large part of all the farms, mines and towns, under the usufruct system, which allows members of the tribes all the land they desire, is practically owned by whites and mixed breeds who have become members of the tribes by marriage and the manipulation of Indian councils. Then no land monopoly had been attempted; now 5 per cent of the owners in common inheritance, while there are at least one-third of the members of the tribes who have no land at all. They have an undivided interest in the richest part of the great west, and theoretically are the richest people in the United States, and yet they have no spot that they call their home.

Mr. Chairman, whatever we may think about the wisdom of these treaties, considering the purposes for which they were made, the time when made and the circumstances surrounding the treaty making power at that time, there is absolutely nothing in the present condition of that country that will justify us in continuing them longer. Why should we hesitate a moment about the matter that calls so loudly for positive and prompt action? It is no unusual thing for a government like this to repeal laws, abrogate treaties or amend constitutions. The constitution itself has already been amended fifteen times. You can scarcely find a state constitution half as old as some of the Indian treaties. If, then, the construction of railroads, the development of mines, the erection of mills and factories, the organization of towns and cities, call for such frequent changes of both the organic and statutory laws of the states, is it any wonder that the Indian Territory has outgrown the narrow tribal governments made for it more than fifty years ago?

It is perfectly clear from the treaty of 1866 that those who represented the United States believed that the holding of the lands in severalty would promote the general civilization of the Indians and tend to advance their individual interests, because all of the details for the survey and allotment of the lands of the Choctaws and Chickasaws were agreed upon even to the extent of locating the land office. Let us make the division and disposal of the improvements, mines, and town property according to the provisions of that treaty. Some of you may not understand this form of government and a common title. The Indian government invited the whites to come among them. The whites rented from the Indians their lands, and were required to pay into the common treasury a small annual permit fee. As the number increased and the country advanced commerce and trade became a necessity. Towns and cities were organized within the inclosure of some member of the tribe. Those who rented, built, or resided upon lots were required to pay an annual rent, not into the treasury of the tribe, but to the Indians who had fenced or held the land under the local law. Towns are laid out upon the lands that have been fenced in and rented.

Mr. Brosius. Can a white man rent? Mr. McRae. Certainly, they would have no towns in the Indian country if they excluded the white man. Mr. Brosius. Can a white man fence in land and control it? Mr. McRae. Not unless he belongs to the Indian tribes. He must be recognized by the Indians. Men born outside of the jurisdiction of this country have secured tribal rights and have control of thousands of acres of the most productive land. The result has been that thousands of Indians are today without any land to fence. The renters get no title to the town lots, and as the towns grow, in some of them are magnificent brick buildings costing from \$1,000 to \$50,000. They have banks, hotels, churches, and everything except city government. These people are not criminals, nor are they squatters or intruders. They are there with the consent of the Indians. They have made the country what it is and have advanced Indian civilization beyond the expectations of the most sanguine dreamer. The Indian governments could not grow and prosper as they do without them, and yet it has been requested that they remain disfranchised and have no voice in the government which they mainly support. I do not claim for the non-citizen any part of the lands, but I do insist that they have rights that must be recognized. They should have the right to purchase the lots upon which their buildings have been erected at a fair valuation, or should be paid for their improvements both in town and country. They have a right to ask for such a change of government as will secure to them public school advantages for the 30,000 white children now growing up in ignorance. It is useless to talk of removing them. Nobody wants that. Nobody expects that it will ever be done.

The absurd proposition to remove the 30,000 whites is abhorrent to every sense of American manhood, and would not receive 20 votes in this congress. The agitation of such a proposition will tend to engender strife and bitterness between the whites and Indians where there should be friendship. The interests of the Indians, as it appears to me, would require that a positive veto should be put upon such a suggestion. They hold leases and permits. Every white man must pay an annual permit fee, which is paid in to the common treasury, and is used for the support of the tribal government. They work upon the farms of these Indian landlords. I am told that some of the Indians pay license fees for as many as thirty white men. They have as perfect a system of landlords as it is possible to create.

These pioneers of civilization and progress, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, went into this wilderness of semi-savages, not for pillage and plunder, but with an earnest desire to advance the civilization of the Indians, promote the cause of good government, and to extend the Christian religion. They have borne the many hardships necessary to such a life, and have aided the government in solving the Indian problem. As a general thing they have always deported themselves as loyal American citizens and deserve to be recognized as such, and not treated as intruders and criminals. Let us be frank with each other and look the question fairly in the face.

Do any of you contemplate that these people shall remain permanently disfranchised? Whether this congress does it or not, sooner or later we will have to admit to citizenship every resident of that territory, white, black, red, or mixed. If you do not intend to organize it into a separate state under the control of the Indians, what will you do with it after you admit Oklahoma? Where will you put it? It has been suggested that it might be attached to some other state. That could not be done under the constitution without the consent of the state. Our difficulties would be increased, because we would then be expected to get the consent of the state as well as the consent of the Indians. I say that the courageous, just, manly thing to do is to give the citizens of the Indian Territory an equal show in forming the constitution under which they must live. They now have 250,000 white citizens as good as those in Oklahoma with a territory almost equal in size to that of Oklahoma. Let them start in the statehood life together, and on equal terms. That would be just to the Indian, and he would count on his white neighbors to protect him against Oklahoma domination. I have not the least doubt in the world that if you start right the people of the Indian Territory will be fully pro-

ected, and can take care of themselves. Oklahoma is beyond the Indian country, and is not as rich nor as fertile, and is not as susceptible of sustaining as dense a population as the Indian country. If the Indian can get his property rights properly protected now he ought to seek an opportunity to accept citizenship and agree to the allotment of the lands. Non-citizens of the Indian country, I think, are practically unanimous for statehood or a territorial government.

The officers and those who control the Indian governments are, of course, opposed to it. There is but little question that the great body of Indians want their lands in severalty. If you could get at them in the quiet of their humble homes and wigwags they would tell you that they prefer American statehood to tribal government.

Now, I have said about all that I desire to say on the general subject. I am not here to obstruct the passage of this bill. On the contrary, if I did not believe its passage would delay statehood I would support it, if amended in some respects. In presenting the views I entertain touching the conditions in the Indian Territory I have endeavored to be fair, and I ask the house to consider them without reference to the fate of this bill. I think it is the duty of congress to see that the flag of the United States, and it alone, shall float over every part of our common country; that the tribal governments shall be promptly and completely abolished; that these absurd, undemocratic and unrepugnant, and antiquated ideas of a common inheritance be forever uprooted.

Let us by proper and speedy legislation wipe out all of the territorial governments by admitting them into the union as sovereign states, settling forever the question of the number of states that shall constitute the American union. An objection is sometimes urged by some of our western friends who say they are unwilling to support the single statehood idea because they want two states; that they would rather have two small states with four senators to offset the influence of the small eastern states in the United States than one great state, such as I advocate. But, Mr. Chairman, that is narrow statesmanship. It is not wise. I appeal to congress to lay aside all partisan feeling and legislate for the best interests of all by taking the Indian Territory and Oklahoma Territory in as one great, big, independent sovereign state of the union, and let her fix her party allegiance afterwards; but, if not now, then I ask of you to do nothing to prevent it from being done in the early future.

**COULD HARDLY WALK**  
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